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United Nations System Staff College

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Background

1. In its resolution 55/207 of 20 December 2000, the General Assembly decided to establish the United Nations System Staff College, as at 1 January 2002 after the approval of its statute, as an institution for system-wide knowledge, management, training and learning for the staff of the United Nations system, aimed, in particular, at the areas of economic and social development, peace and security and internal management of the system.

2. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue consultations on an urgent basis with the Administrative Committee on Coordination and relevant United Nations organizations and to submit, as early as possible, a final draft of the statute for the Staff College reflecting, as appropriate, the outcome of those consultations on functions, governance and funding for review and approval by the Assembly, preferably at its fifty-fifth session.

3. In response to the above provisions of the resolution, a final draft of the statute of the Staff College is hereby submitted to the General Assembly for its review and approval (see annex). The draft statute was prepared through an extensive process of inter-agency consultations that intensified after the adoption of resolution 55/207.

4. Modalities for institutionalizing the United Nations System Staff College were examined by the Administrative Committee on Coordination at its last session, held in Nairobi in April 2001, based on the direction given by the General Assembly. As envisaged in resolution 55/207, the Committee provided guidance on the functions, governance and funding arrangements for the College. The draft statute was subsequently completed on that basis, through inter-agency consultations within the framework of the newly established high-level committees on management and on programmes of the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

5. The decision of the General Assembly to establish the United Nations System Staff College is of particular significance for the United Nations and the other organizations of the system. It may be recalled that the Assembly's deliberations and decision were based on recommendations of the Secretary-General made in the light of an independent evaluation of the future of the Staff College conducted in 2001 (see A/55/369 and Add.1).

6. Welcoming the adoption of resolution 55/207, the Secretary-General stated that the Staff College could play an important role in advancing a common culture for the United Nations system. He added that the global challenges facing the system increasingly call for new, concerted responses cutting across the various areas of competence of its organizations and mobilizing their

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complementary expertise. By providing a common, modern instrument for learning to work together and to share knowledge, the College would strengthen the capacity of staff of the various organizations to meet those challenges in a more concerted and effective way. The Staff College can, in particular, serve as an important new tool for helping United Nations system staff to put in practice the common orientations promoted by the United Nations and the Administrative Committee on Coordination, thus enhancing the collective capacity of the system to "internalize" and contribute concretely to the follow-up of intergovernmental directives for the integrated implementation of the outcomes of recent major conferences and summits, and especially the Millennium Summit. The College should thus be seen as an integral part of the response of the system to General Assembly resolution 55/162 of 14 December 2000 on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure system-wide coordination to assist with the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 52/2), and invited him to identify, within the framework of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, innovative ways of enhancing cooperation and coherence throughout the United Nations system.

7. The "team spirit" that the United Nations System Staff College will strive to build on and reinforce has pervaded the process of preparing its draft statute. The organizations of the system have, in particular, welcomed the broad scope that the General Assembly has envisaged for the work of the Staff College, encompassing the areas of economic and social development, peace and security and internal management, which they viewed as covering the totality of the activities of United Nations system's organizations in support of economic growth and social development, the eradication of poverty, human rights, conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peace-building, and encompassing also the substantive and managerial actions required to ensure that the system's activities in those areas are efficiently administered and mutually reinforcing. With regard in particular to the contribution of the College to the management of change, the provisions of the most recent Assembly resolution on human resources management (resolution 55/258) and the emphasis placed on the contribution of the Staff College to continuous learning fully correspond to the expectations of the organizations of the United Nations system as to the role of the College.

8. The organizations of the United Nations system also appreciate the desire of the General Assembly, in its resolution 55/207, that final action by the Assembly on the Staff College Statute should take place preferably at its fifty-fifth session, and have expedited, to that end, the further inter-agency consultations envisaged in resolution 55/207. Indeed, in order for the Staff College, under the new statute, to become fully operational as from 1 January 2002, as provided for in the resolution, different arrangements, from the finalization of the College's new programme for the next biennium to the definition of contractual arrangements for the College staff and the elaboration of a new agreement with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Board of the Turin Centre on the use and sharing of the Centre's facilities,[1] will have to be worked out in the coming months and should be based on the Assembly's action on the draft statute.

II. Highlights of the proposed statute for the Staff College

9. In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 55/207, the guidance provided by the Administrative Committee on Coordination at its April 2001 session, as reflected in the draft statute, focused on the functions as well as the governance and funding arrangements for the Staff College.

10. With regard to functions, the Committee concluded that the Staff College should operate as a system-wide, demand-driven institution dedicated to innovation and reform across the United Nations system and that it should focus on fostering a common United Nations system culture as well as cooperation and knowledge-sharing among the organizations of the system on managerial and strategic policy issues of common concern.

11. Thus, in providing for the Staff College to function as a distinct system-wide knowledge-management and learning institution, the draft statute envisages that the College will aim at fostering a cohesive management culture across the United Nations system and at strengthening collaboration in areas that cut across lines of organizational responsibility (art. II, para. 1).

12. The need for developing a common culture and more collaborative methods of work within the United Nations system — both as a response to the new challenges facing the system in a globalizing world and as a requirement for greater cost-effectiveness and impact — has been a leitmotif of the discussions and reporting by the Administrative Committee on Coordination over the past few years. Indeed, not only is it increasingly crucial for the system to provide concerted support to Governments for pursuing the interrelated priorities of the Millennium Declaration, building on recent conferences and summits, but the Declaration also defines greater cooperation and policy coherence in the work of the various organizations of the system as objectives in their own right.

13. Different arrangements, institutions and coordination modalities have been reviewed and reoriented to maximize their contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Millennium Declaration. This objective has guided the Administrative Committee on Coordination in reforming its subsidiary machinery, and is also the objective that led the Committee to conceive the Staff College under the new statute not, as has been the case so far, simply as a facility available to the system, but rather as an integral part of the Committee's own methods for enhancing system-wide coherence and impact.

14. Because the impact of the organizations of the system is increasingly defined by their function as repositories and providers of knowledge, a system-wide knowledge-sharing instrument fills an important gap in the inter-agency structure of the system and can significantly add to the capacity of those structures to respond effectively to new requirements and circumstances.

15. A corollary of this approach is the importance of close collaboration between the Staff College and other training and learning institutions within the system — a requirement that is duly reflected in article II, paragraph 2, of the draft statute. Close collaboration will in particular continue between the Staff College and the ILO International Training Centre in Turin, Italy, not only because of the collocation of the College on the campus of the Turin Centre, but also, more importantly, because of the cross-fertilization and mutual advantage that can be derived from close interaction between the two institutions. As noted above, the use of the services and facilities of the International Training Centre will be the object of a separate agreement currently under consideration between the United Nations and ILO.

16. While Turin will be hub of the activities of the Staff College, the College will continue to carry out its activities in different United Nations system headquarters and field locations as well as through distance learning, so as to reach out to the largest possible number of United Nations system staff.

17. It is intended that the Staff College under the proposed statute should aim at enhancing the ability of United Nations system staff to cooperate not only across United Nations organizations but also with the wider international community and with civil society in optimizing the services provided to Member States. Helping to deepen the system's ability to establish and widen partnerships in support of Member States' objectives is yet another important potential contribution that the College can make in advancing reform in the United Nations and the system as a whole.

18. A key feature of the provisions of the draft statute is to establish true ownership of the Staff College by the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system. This is the underlying intent of the statute's provision that the College should carry out its activities on the basis of the needs expressed by the agencies (art. II, para. 2). It is, at the same time, the guiding principle that has determined the governance structure of the College set out in the draft statute.

19. Thus, under the proposed statute, the Board of Governors of the Staff College is to be composed of the organizations that are members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and report to it. In line with the new methods of work established by the Committee for its two new high-level committees on management and on programmes, executive heads will appoint senior officials as their representatives on the Board, and the Board itself will designate smaller executive committees to assist it in guiding specific aspects of the operations of the College and in evaluating their impact and mobilizing resources for new initiatives.

20. As an integral part of governance arrangements, and as provided for in General Assembly resolution 55/207, the statute envisages regular reporting to the Assembly on the activities of the Staff College (art. IV,

para. 5), thus enabling Member States to assess progress and provide overall policy guidance.

21. The Staff College will be able to draw on the wide range of competencies available within the United Nations system for its courses and its programme. The College has started to build a network of such managers and experts from within the system, and its new inter-agency governing structure is geared to facilitating the identification and mobilization of the system's best expertise in different areas.

22. While the system's own expertise will be fully drawn upon, it is intended that a variety of arrangements will be deployed to enable the Staff College to mobilize advice and expertise on a worldwide basis, including academicians and personalities and experts from both the public and the private sectors, so as to enhance the responsiveness and relevance of its different programmes. The aim is to ensure state-of-the-art quality for the College's programmes and a capacity to adjust flexibly to emerging requirements. As part of the same approach, the draft statute envisages that the Director of the Staff College may designate from time to time well-qualified persons as associate collaborators (art. VI, paras. 1 and 2).

23. The principle of system-wide ownership has likewise guided the financing arrangements set out in the draft statute. Thus, the statute provides that the core portion of the Staff College's budget is to be met on a cost-sharing basis by the organizations of the system, with the College's operations continuing to be supported through fees for courses and voluntary contributions (art. VII).

24. Voluntary contributions have been crucial in building up the capabilities of the Staff College in the initial years of its operation as a project, and will indeed remain essential in enabling the College, under its statute, to effectively respond to the requirements of the system, as envisaged by the General Assembly. Indeed, the Secretary-General would like to take the opportunity to express his appreciation for the generous contributions made and pledged by the host country and other donors to the work of the College.

25. While these voluntary contributions will remain essential in the years to come, it was felt that ownership by the system would be enhanced by the introduction of a cost-sharing component for at least a core portion of the budget. Such contributions will be handled by each agency in accordance with its own procedures, but will typically be integrated and absorbed within the organization's budgeted training and inter-agency activities so as to avoid additional budgetary provisions. This is intended to provide a further incentive not only for United Nations system organizations to make maximum use of the services of the Staff College, but also for the Administrative Committee on Coordination to contain costs and to guide the College towards eventual financial self-reliance. Overall, the Committee's approach to the financial arrangements for the Staff College is one that is intended not only to leverage and optimize the use of voluntary contributions, but also to contribute to greater overall efficiency and savings in the utilization of the system's total resources in support of Member States.

26. For the rest, under the proposed statute, the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations are to apply fully to the financial operations of the Staff College.

27. As part of the United Nations, the Staff College is to enjoy the status, privileges and immunities pertaining to the Organization. The relevant provisions of the draft statute (art. IX, para. 1) will be reflected in the host country agreement to be entered into by the United Nations and the Italian authorities following the adoption of the statute by the General Assembly.

28. It is of course understood that participating agencies may consult with their governing bodies on any aspects of the statute they consider necessary, and that an organization may not withdraw its acceptance of the statute unless it has given adequate prior notice to the Secretary-General, in accordance with established procedures.

III. Recommendations

29. It is recommended that the General Assembly, in adopting the draft statute of the United Nations System Staff College, as contained in the annex, recall its resolutions 55/207 on the Staff College and 55/258 on human resources management, and reaffirm the objectives of the institution as set out in those resolutions. Furthermore, the Assembly may wish to recall the provisions of its resolution 55/162 on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, invite the Administrative Committee on Coordination

to identify innovative ways of enhancing cooperation and coherence throughout the United Nations system and indicate the expectation that the Staff College will contribute to the system's capacity to meet these objectives in a cost-effective way. Finally, the Assembly may wish to reiterate its request for a biennial report on the College, as envisaged in resolution 55/207. Pending the first such report, to be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, Member States will be updated regularly on measures taken to give effect to the statute and on the progress made in putting in motion the operations of the Staff College along the new path set by the Assembly.

Notes

[1] The Staff College has been operating for the past six years as a United Nations project administered by the ILO Training Centre. The current year is one of transition during which the arrangements that prevailed for the five years for which the project was initially established were extended, pending the institutionalization of the College by the General Assembly during 2001 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/207.

Annex

Draft statute of the United Nations System Staff College

Article I
Establishment

The General Assembly of the United Nations, by adopting the present statute, establishes the United Nations System Staff College as at 1 January 2002 as an institution for system-wide knowledge-management, training and learning for the staff of the United Nations system, aimed in particular at the areas of economic and social development, peace and security and internal management of the United Nations system.

Article II
Objectives

1. The Staff College shall serve as a distinct system-wide knowledge-management and learning institution, with a view to fostering a cohesive management culture across the United Nations system. It shall provide strategic leadership and management development for international civil servants with a view to strengthening collaboration within the system in areas that cut across lines of organizational responsibility, increasing operational effectiveness, enhancing cooperation with Member States and non-governmental organizations and developing a more cohesive system-wide management culture.

2. The Staff College shall carry out its activities on the basis of the perceived needs expressed by the agencies of the United Nations system and in close cooperation with training and learning institutes and similar bodies within the United Nations system. It may also collaborate with relevant entities outside the system.

Article III
Location

The Staff College shall be located in Turin, Italy.

Article IV
Governance

1. The Staff College shall have a Board of Governors composed of representatives of the member organizations of the Administrative Committee on Coordination. The Director of the Staff College shall participate as an ex officio member in the work of the Board and shall arrange for secretarial support for the Board.

2. The Board shall meet at least once a year and shall adopt its own rules of procedure, which shall be consistent with the provisions of the present statute.

3. The Board shall be responsible for:

(a) Formulating general policy for the activities of the Staff College;

(b) Considering the work programme and budget, on the basis of proposals submitted by the Director, and making recommendations thereon to the Administrative Committee on Coordination;

(c) Considering ways and means of enhancing the financial resources of the Staff College with a view to ensuring the effectiveness and continuity of its operations;

(d) Evaluating the activities of the Staff College and their impact and reporting thereon to the Administrative Committee on Coordination;

(e) Submitting an annual report to the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

4. The Board shall establish an expert technical review panel to advise on the development of the activities of the Staff College, to review its performance and to report thereon to the Board. The technical review panel shall be composed of expert staff of the common system organizations who shall be selected by the Board.

5. The Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, shall submit a biennial report to the General Assembly on the activities of the Staff College.

Article V
Director and staff

1. The Director of the Staff College shall be appointed by the Secretary-General after consultation with the Administrative Committee on Coordination in the light of criteria recommended by the Board.

2. The Director shall be responsible for the management of the Staff College and accountable for

2. The Director shall be responsible for the management of the Staff College and accountable for its results in accordance with directives issued by the Board. The Director shall, in consultation as appropriate with the technical review panel, inter alia:

(a) Submit the work programme and budget of the Staff College to the Board for its consideration;

(b) Oversee the execution of the work programme and budget of the Staff College;

(c) Submit to the Board annual and ad hoc reports on the activities of the Staff College and the execution of its work programme;

(d) Manage the staff of the Staff College in accordance with the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and the terms of the present statute;

(e) Coordinate the work of the Staff College with that of related organs of the United Nations system and of relevant institutions outside the system;

(f) Negotiate such arrangements, including those with Governments, as may be appropriate with a view to offering and receiving services related to the activities of the Staff College;

(g) Seek appropriate funding for the implementation of the work programme of the Staff College;

(h) Accept, subject to the provisions of article VII below, voluntary contributions to the Staff College.

3. The staff of the Staff College shall be appointed by the Director on behalf of the Secretary-General under letters of appointment signed by him or her and limited to service with the Staff College. The staff shall be responsible to the Director in the exercise of their functions.

4. The terms and conditions of service of the Director and the staff shall be those provided in the Staff Regulations and Rules, subject to such administrative arrangements as are approved by the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

5. The Director and the staff of the Staff College shall be officials of the United Nations within the meaning of Article 105 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Article VI
Associate collaborators and consultants

1. The Director may designate a limited number of well-qualified persons to serve as associate collaborators of the Staff College. Associate collaborators shall be permitted to pursue their work at the Staff College and shall be expected to provide advice and assistance in matters related to the work programme of the Staff College.

2. Associate collaborators shall be designated for a fixed period in accordance with their qualifications and with the criteria and procedures established by the Director and approved by the Board. Associate collaborators shall neither be staff members of the Staff College nor consultants or officials of the United Nations.

3. The Director may arrange for the services of consultants for special assignments in connection with the work programme of the Staff College.

Article VII
Finance

1. The Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, as well as the financial procedures of the United Nations, shall apply to the financial operations of the Staff College.

2. The Staff College shall have a biennial budget approved by the Administrative Committee on Coordination. A core portion of this budget shall be met by the members of the Committee in accordance with the cost-sharing formula decided upon by it.

3. The Staff College may also receive voluntary contributions from Governments, intergovernmental organizations and foundations and other non-governmental sources.

4. The Director may accept contributions on behalf of the Staff College, provided that no contribution for a specific purpose may be accepted if the purpose is inconsistent with the purposes and policies of the Staff College and the United Nations financial regulations and rules. Contributions that may directly or indirectly involve an immediate or ultimate financial liability for the Staff College may be accepted only with the approval of the Board, after consultation with the Controller of the United Nations.

5. The Staff College will organize courses and other activities related to its mandates on a fee basis.

6. The Director of the Staff College shall prepare budgets on a biennial basis. The budget shall show separately the core portion of the budget and projected income and expenditures in respect of voluntary contributions. The Director shall present the proposed budget to the Board at least six weeks before the session of the Board at which it is to be considered.

7. The Board shall consider the proposed budget and make recommendations thereon to the Administrative Committee on Coordination. The budget, as approved by the Committee, shall be forwarded to the participating agencies. The United Nations shall bill the agencies for their share of the core budget.

8. The funds of the Staff College shall be kept in a separate account to be established by the Secretary-General in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the United Nations.

9. The funds of the Staff College shall be administered solely for the purposes of the Staff College. The United Nations shall perform all necessary financial and accounting functions for the Staff College, including acting as custodian of its funds, and shall prepare and certify the biennial accounts of the Staff College.

10. The Director may enter into commitments only if the total amount of such commitments does not exceed the core portion of the budget and the amount of voluntary contributions received.

11. The Staff College shall be subject to audit by the United Nations Board of Auditors in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules.

Article VIII
Administrative support

The United Nations shall provide the Staff College with appropriate administrative support. The Staff College shall reimburse such support at a level that shall be determined from time to time in consultations between the United Nations and the Board.

Article IX
Status and authority

1. The Staff College, as part of the United Nations, shall enjoy the status, privileges and immunities provided in Articles 104 and 105 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and other international agreements and United Nations resolutions relating to the status and privileges and immunities of the organization.

2. The Staff College may, under the authority of the Director, enter into contracts with organizations, institutions or firms for the purpose of carrying out its programmes. The Staff College may acquire and dispose of real and personal property and may take other legal action necessary for the performance of its functions.

Article X
Amendments

Amendments to the present statute may be made by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Administrative Committee on Coordination.